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Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination, including the provision of further guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination

Report of the Secretary General

Summary

The present report on enhanced cooperation provides a brief overview of the activities undertaken since the eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests related to enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant forest-related international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

The report is intended to facilitate the deliberations of Member States at the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in relation to cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination. It highlights further possibilities for cooperation in the context of the overall theme of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication", the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the four global objectives on forests.

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I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Forum on Forests decided, through its resolution 1/1, to address enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination at each session. The present report builds on the structure of past reports and provides a brief overview of the activities undertaken since the eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests related to enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant forest-related international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, in particular the Rio Conventions and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The report highlights further possibilities for cooperation in the context of the overall theme of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication", the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the four global objectives on forests.

II. System-wide cooperation and policy and programme coordination

A. Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly

2. Within the reform process of the United Nations aimed at improving system-wide coordination and coherence, the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, decided that the Council should hold annual ministerial-level reviews as part of its high-level segment, and requested it to consider launching a development cooperation forum on the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The themes for the 2009 and 2010 annual ministerial reviews of the Council were "implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health", and "implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women", respectively.

3. The secretariat of the Forum contributed substantively to the preparation of the annual ministerial reviews in 2009 and 2010, by providing relevant United Nations Forum on Forests decisions and information for inclusion in the official documents of the reviews. In addition, the Chair of the Bureau of the ninth session of the Forum and the Forum secretariat participated in the annual joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council Bureau and the Chairpersons of the functional commissions held in January 2010 in New York and provided the Forum's contributions to the theme of the 2010 annual ministerial review on gender equality and empowerment of women. Other issues discussed during that meeting included enhancing cooperation and coherence between the Council and its functional commissions. The Chair of the Bureau of the ninth session of the Forum emphasized the importance of mutually beneficial cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, through which key issues of concern to the latter are also reflected in the Council outcomes.

B. High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals

4. The High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly held in September 2010 reviewed the progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and received high-level political attention from Governments. The Forum secretariat contributed to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General and other relevant documents for the Meeting. The secretariat of the Forum also provided substantive contributions to the background papers for the various round tables, in particular, to the one on sustainable development, in an effort to highlight the role of forests in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In order to accelerate progress towards achieving Goal 7, Governments committed themselves to strengthening political commitment and action at all levels to effectively implement the global objectives on forests and the sustainable forest management of all types of forests in order to reduce the loss of forest cover and improve the livelihoods of those that depend on forests through the development of a comprehensive and more effective approach to financing activities. The involvement of local and indigenous communities and other relevant stakeholders, the promotion of good governance at the national and international levels, and enhancement of international cooperation to address the threats posed by illicit activities were also linked to progress towards achieving Goal 7.

C. Functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and the regional commissions

Activities of the secretariat of the Forum in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

5. The Forum secretariat continued to participate actively in the intra-departmental activities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and co-chaired the departmental Working Group on climate change, the Task Force on Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Development, the Task Force on Indigenous Issues, and the task force on the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) preparatory process. The secretariat contributes each year to the consolidated report of the Secretary-General on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, and provides information and policy recommendations relevant to the themes being considered by the Council. The secretariat also prepared two policy briefs, entitled "Finance for forests and climate change" and "Forests: the green and REDD of climate change".[1]

D. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

6. The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues continued to work together; the secretariat participates in the Inter-Agency Support Group on indigenous peoples as well as the Task Force on Indigenous Issues. It contributed to the ninth session of the Permanent Forum on

[1] Available at http://www.un.org/esa/policy/policybriefs/policybrief15.pdf and at http://www.un.org/esa/policy/policybriefs/policybrief16.pdf.

Indigenous Issues (April 2010), and participated in a panel discussion on indigenous peoples and forests highlighting the contributions made by indigenous peoples in the sustainable forest management and opportunities offered by the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests for gaining high political attention to forests and indigenous peoples. The statement adopted by the panel is being transmitted to the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The Indigenous Peoples' major group plays an active part in the multi-stakeholder dialogues of the Forum.

III. Cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements, United Nations programmes, multilateral financial mechanisms and other international entities

7. At its eighth session, the Forum invited the governing bodies of member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, in particular the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to continue to integrate, as appropriate, sustainable forest management in their strategies. The Forum invited member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to support, within their capacities, consistent with their mandates and upon request, South-South cooperation with initiatives concerning sustainable forest management, including through convening workshops and providing technical assistance, subject to available resources. It encouraged Member States to strengthen coordination, in particular among their national focal points for the Forum, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, to facilitate the implementation of sustainable forest management at the national and other applicable levels; and to share experiences at the ninth session of the Forum. There has been active cooperation with relevant international organizations within and outside the United Nations system relevant to the forest sector.

8. During its eighth session, the Forum also requested its secretariat to explore with the secretariats of the Rio Conventions a format and opportunities for collaboration and cooperation and to develop targeted joint activities related to the International Year of Forests (Forests 2011) and to report on progress thereon to the Forum at its ninth session. The Forum secretariat is working in collaboration with United Nations programmes, secretariats of the Rio Conventions and other international entities on initiatives to celebrate Forests 2011. An overview of those activities is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of Forests (E/CN.18/2011/7).

9. At its eighth session, the Forum noted in particular the opportunities for cooperation and coordination provided by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (Buenos Aires, September 2009), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Copenhagen, December 2009) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya, Japan, October 2010). The Forum secretariat participated actively in those meetings and continued to be actively engaged in collaborative work.

A. Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

10. The secretariats of the Forum and of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification signed a memorandum of understanding that was aimed at identifying gaps, obstacles and opportunities in financing sustainable land management and sustainable forest management, and focusing on expanding the implementation of sustainable forest management beyond tropical rainforests to include dry forests and trees outside forests.

11. The Forum secretariat participated in the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which was held in Buenos Aires in September 2009, and actively participated in the high-level segment, including by facilitating a panel discussion. The Forum secretariat also initiated collaboration with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification secretariat and other partners on land degradation activities, under the auspices of the Environment Management Group.

B. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

12. The Forum secretariat participated in the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was held in December 2009 in Copenhagen. During the Conference of the Parties, the Forum secretariat and the Centre for International Forest Research (CIFOR), a member organization of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, jointly organized, with other members of the Partnership, the third Forest Day, in which close to 1,600 representatives from Governments, the scientific and academic community and major group organizations participated. Three subplenary sessions discussed mitigation, adaptation and degradation, and eight parallel learning events discussed other issues related to forests and climate change. A summary statement was prepared on the basis of responses from participants to a series of questions posed at the subplenary sessions, and was presented to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

13. Collaboration in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change continued during the first meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on Forest Financing, held in Nairobi in September 2010, with participation by the secretariat of the Convention, which made a presentation on forest financing. The Forum secretariat continues to be actively involved with other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and co-hosted the fourth Forest Day in Cancún, Mexico, during the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

C. Convention on Biological Diversity

14. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity was held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. At the Conference, member States adopted three interlinked goals: a new Convention on Biological Diversity Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2020, a decision on activities

and indicators for the implementation of a resource mobilization strategy; and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization. The Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity or the "Aichi Target", includes 20 headline targets arranged under five strategic goals. Among the targets related to forests, Member States agreed to at least halve and, where feasible, bring close to zero the rate of loss of natural habitats, including forests, and to restore at least 15 per cent of degraded areas through conservation and restoration efforts. The "Aichi Target" is meant to offer a framework on biodiversity for the entire United Nations system.

15. The tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity also adopted several forest-related agenda items, including on forest biodiversity, protected areas and the sustainable use of biodiversity. Cooperation between both secretariats was discussed under the item on forest biodiversity and focused on the framework of collaboration between the secretariats of the Forum and the Convention on Biological Diversity and the memorandum of understanding that they both signed in 2009. Collaboration between both secretariats will contribute to advancing the implementation of the programme of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity on forest biological diversity and the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. Member States agreed to support joint capacity-building activities in forest biodiversity and climate change by the two secretariats, to promote regional cooperation, including South-South cooperation on forests, and to streamline forest-related reporting, in cooperation with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The Conference also underscored the unique opportunities for raising awareness on forest biodiversity during the International Year of Forests and encouraged donors to fund Forests 2011-related activities and a joint staff position to be based at the Forum secretariat.

D. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

16. Close cooperation and coordination between the Forum secretariat and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), especially the Forestry Department, continued. The Forum secretariat participated in the twentieth session of the Committee on Forestry, held at FAO headquarters in Rome in October 2010, and presented messages from the Forum's Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on Forest Finance. The Ad Hoc Expert Group called for close collaboration with FAO and the National Forest Policy Facility to develop and implement national forest policy and legislation on financing for forests. The Committee on Forestry invited the Forum to use the results of Global Forest Resources Assessment for 2010 and 2015 as a tool for measuring progress towards sustainable forest management. The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests invited FAO to collaborate with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests on forest financing in support of the work of the Ad Hoc Expert Group. In preparation for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the Committee on Forestry recommended that Member States and FAO highlight the contributions of forests to the global developmental agenda at the ninth session of the Forum so as to increase their visibility at the global level, as well as actively participate in the International Year of Forests.

E. United Nations Environment Programme and the Global Environment Facility

17. At its eighth session, the Forum recognized the special needs and requirements of countries with fragile ecosystems, including those of small island developing States and low forest cover countries. At the special session of its ninth session, held in October 2009, the Forum, by its resolution on the means of implementation for sustainable forest management, decided to establish a facilitative process on forest financing. The Forum secretariat, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), developed a facilitative process initiative to identify gaps, obstacles and opportunities in financing sustainable forest management in targeting small island developing States and low forest cover countries. The project is the fruit of collaboration between the Forum secretariat, as the executing agency, and UNEP, as the implementing agency. The two organizations signed a letter of agreement in Nairobi in September 2010 to design and implement the project together, with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Components II and III of the project are currently being designed in close cooperation with UNEP. Component II will consist of four international workshops (two in small island developing States and two in low forest cover countries) in which stakeholders will be able to discuss the findings from the initial work and become more closely engaged with the project. Component III will consist of a revision of the analyses, together with a communications strategy to reach out to all forest financing stakeholders.

18. GEF agreed to a US$ 1 million grant for the implementation of components II and III of the project, giving life to the facilitative process on forest financing that aims to assist countries in mobilizing funds for forests. GEF and the Forum secretariat aim to continue collaborating closely in the near future, especially since GEF has recently created a new window of funding specifically for sustainable forest management and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus conservation (REDD-plus).

F. International Tropical Timber Organization

19. The Forum secretariat continues to work in close cooperation with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). A senior ITTO staff member was seconded to the Forum secretariat for a 12-month period to facilitate cooperation between the Forum and ITTO. In order to take cooperation to the next stage, ITTO and the Forum secretariat are entering into a memorandum of understanding to provide a framework to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the two secretariats in order to facilitate the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the multi-year programme of work of the Forum as well as the ITTO action plans, biennial work programmes and thematic programmes. The memorandum of understanding will cover the period 2010-2015 and focus on: (a) collaborating in raising awareness of the important links between forests and the environment, employment creation, poverty reduction and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals; (b) working cooperatively to gain a better understanding of the potential contribution of the forest sector to the green economy and develop appropriate tools to support Governments, the private sector and

communities, in particular; (c) utilizing the International Year of Forests, 2011, to highlight the links between forests and sustainable development; (d) continuing to second an ITTO staff/consultant to the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, to perform the functions of Principal Trade Officer for a period of two years (2011-2013).

20. At its eighth session, the Forum agreed to develop a strategy to promote North-South, South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, on sustainable forest management, while noting that South-South cooperation was not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation. Accordingly, in December 2009, the Forum secretariat, in collaboration with ITTO, organized a two-day brainstorming workshop aimed at identifying basic elements for a strategy on North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation on sustainable forest management for consideration by the Forum at its ninth session. A total of 23 participants from 15 countries and 4 international and national organizations participated in the workshop.

21. The workshop examined, among other issues, the basic building blocks for cooperation on sustainable forest management, the existing regional and subregional institutional arrangements between countries, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Central African Forest Commission and the Southern African Development Community initiatives. These entities, in particular, were highlighted for having thus far played a critical role in facilitating discussions and sharing experiences on sustainable forest management, thereby improving the likelihood of success for cooperation. Other issues covered in the workshop included elements for cooperation and an outline on a cooperation strategy; and the different types of cooperation in the context of sustainable forest management, the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the global objectives on forests. It discussed the process towards finalizing the strategy for North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation on sustainable forest management was discussed at the workshop and it was emphasized that the process had to be open and transparent and the need for further engagement of as many member States as possible after the first consultative/workshop meeting.

G. International Year of Forests

22. The Forum secretariat has continued to actively engage Member States, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional arrangements and major groups in the preparations for the launch and observance of the International Year of Forests, 2011. The Forum's cooperation with those organizations and entities is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of Forests (E/CN.18/2011/7).

IV. Stakeholder involvement

23. Stakeholder participation in the Forum on Forests process continues to be important. During its eighth session, the Forum encouraged Member States and requested the Forum secretariat to explore ways to increase the participation of stakeholders and civil society, including indigenous and other local and forest-

dependent communities, and other holders of traditional forest-related knowledge, in future sessions of the Forum.

24. The Forum secretariat organized regular consultations with focal points of major groups throughout 2009 and 2010, in preparation for the current session. Representatives of major groups presented their perspectives at a panel discussion entitled "Forests, women and fuelwood" at the eighth session of the Forum. The representatives also contributed significantly to the work of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on Forest Financing convened in Nairobi in September 2010. The major groups participated in the discussions in an open manner alongside the government experts and submitted their proposals and comments on the issues under discussion at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group.

25. As part of enhancing the role of stakeholders in the Forum and in advancing sustainable forest management, the major groups convened an initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests in Accra, from 26 to 30 July 2010, which focused on applying sustainable forest management to poverty reduction and strengthening the multi-stakeholder approach within the Forum. The major group-led initiative provided an opportunity for representatives of major groups to actively develop coordinated and focused contributions and policy recommendations for the ninth session of the Forum. In the spirit of collaboration, the major groups decided to submit three joint discussion papers, reflecting their views on the three sub-themes for the ninth session of the Forum (E/CN.18/2011/9/Add.1-3), rather than to submit individual papers on each subject — a truly impressive feat of coordination.

V. Country-led and organization-led initiatives in support of the Forum

26. Country- and organization-led initiatives have served to further the work of the Forum. At its sixth session, the Forum recommended that country-led initiatives address issues identified in the multi-year programme of work. Further to this, at its seventh session, the Forum recommended that the convening of initiatives led by countries, organizations and regions in support of the work of the Forum focus on topical issues of the 2007-2015 multi-year programme of work. The initiatives have played a significant role in highlighting the work of the Forum and in providing valuable expert contributions for its consideration. The Forum secretariat has continued to actively provide input to and advice on all initiatives organized in support of the Forum.

27. At its eighth session, the Forum agreed to promote further and facilitate regional and subregional dialogue and cooperation on forests, including through country-led and region-led initiatives, to enhance regional and subregional contributions to the implementation of sustainable forest management and inputs to future sessions of the Forum within the framework of the multi-year programme of work. During the intersessional period between the eighth and ninth sessions, four initiatives in support of the Forum were held.

28. In November 2009, an international expert meeting entitled "Forests for people: the role of national forest programmes and the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests: a country-led initiative in support of the United

Nations Forum on Forests", sponsored by China, Austria, Germany, Finland and the United States of America and supported by a number of international organizations, was held in Guilin, China. The expert meeting shared experiences and lessons learned in the use of national forest programmes to achieve sustainable forest management and as a means to implement the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests to enhance the contribution of forests to people's well-being. It made a number of recommendations to the Forum for its consideration and stressed the need to strengthen international support mechanisms to facilitate implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and financing for sustainable forest management.

29. In July 2010, a multi-stakeholder workshop organized to support the United Nations Forum on Forests process, entitled "Applying sustainable forest management to poverty reduction: strengthening the multi-stakeholder approach within the United Nations Forum on Forests" was held in Accra. The workshop was aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of major groups at the policymaking level and identifying strengths and weaknesses in the multi-stakeholder dialogue process associated with the Forum and creating specific recommendations for increasing its effectiveness. It recognized efforts by Member States and stakeholders to advance sustainable forest management through the Forum and to develop key recommendations linked to tenure rights, access and benefit-sharing, traditional forest-related knowledge, community-based forest enterprises, and leadership for sustainable forest management among women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups.

30. In September 2010, an expert workshop on "Forest governance and REDD in Latin America: emerging issues", held in Oaxaca, Mexico, sought to identify trends and facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned on sustainable forest management, forest governance and decentralization in the light of REDD-plus; to identify opportunities and threats to livelihoods and poor people; and to contribute directly to the ninth session of the Forum. Key recommendations to the Forum included supporting the strengthening of the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit-sharing, and preservation of their cultural and social values through sustainable forest management and REDD-plus; and promoting synergies between climate change adaptation and mitigation in forests through sustainable forest management.

31. The United Nations Forum on Forests has benefited from these, as well as previous, initiatives hosted by countries and international organizations and major groups in support of its work. In the light of the experiences and lessons learned from initiatives led by countries, organizations and regions, and in order to help with even more targeted input to the work of the Forum, the Bureau of the ninth session of the Forum has developed draft guidelines for such initiatives for consideration by the Forum. These guidelines, which are annexed to the present report, are drawn from previous decisions and resolutions of the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

VI. Cooperation with regional and subregional partnerships and processes

32. The Forum secretariat has continued to support and actively engage with regional and international processes, including the Asia Forest Partnership the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management, the African Forest Forum, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, the Montreal Process, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, the Tehran Process on low forest cover countries, the International Model Forest Network, a number of forest law enforcement and governance processes, the Forest Europe and other regional criteria and indicator-related processes. Information on the Forum's cooperation with regional and subregional partnerships and processes is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on regional and subregional inputs (E/CN.18/2011/3).

VII. Issues for further consideration

33. Enhanced cooperation and cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination play a vital role in the achievement of sustainable forest management, the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the attainment of the four global objectives on forests, in particular because of the existence of various instruments, institutions and programmes and processes relevant for forests.

34. In addressing linkages at the cross-sectoral international, regional, subregional and national levels, countries may wish to:

(a) **Request the Secretary-General to continue to address the relationship between forests and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, at relevant international and regional meetings, including regional implementation meetings, within the context of sustainable economic, social and environmental development;**

(b) **Request the Secretary-General to continue to facilitate the incorporation of forest-related issues more effectively as part of the work of forest-related international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to enable closer collaboration and work with those organizations and processes;**

(c) **Consider incorporating and strengthening activities related to observance of the International Year of Forests, 2011;**

(d) **Support major group initiatives on the role of civil society actors and the means of their engagement with the Forum and the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests in order to enhance stakeholder engagement in the Forum process;**

(e) **Consider, in addressing linkages at the regional and subregional levels, how the Forum can actively engage regional and subregional organizations in strengthening regional participation in forest-related activities.**

35. **The Collaborative Partnership on Forests provides critical support to the work of the Forum by enhancing cooperation and coordination among its member organizations. Further cooperation opportunities could be explored in**

advancing a common message on sustainable forest management based on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Strategic Framework for Forests and Climate Change. The Partnership may wish to continue to strengthen collaborative activities with the Forum, including in:

(a) Implementing the Forum resolution on forest financing, by supporting the facilitative process developed by the Forum secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme and exploring the possibility of cooperating in the implementation of components II and III of the facilitative process project;

(b) Continuing to provide a framework to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the Forum secretariat and the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to facilitate the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the multi-year programme of work of the Forum;

(c) Continuing to develop and implement targeted joint activities related to the observance of the International Year of Forests, 2011.

Annex

Draft guidelines for country-led, organization-led, region-led and major group-led initiatives in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests

I. Background

International expert meetings in support of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests hosted by countries or others have made important and extremely significant contributions to the process. These initiatives are innovative and unique mechanisms of the intergovernmental forest policy process (the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and the United Nations Forum on Forests) that have deepened the knowledge on important issues concerning sustainable forest management and international cooperation in that regard. The usefulness of such initiatives is evident from the recognition they have received for their contributions in achieving consensus, and from the increasing number of countries, organizations and major groups that have hosted such initiatives in recent years. In the light of the experiences and lessons learned from initiatives led by countries, organizations and regions, the Bureau of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests has developed guidelines for such initiatives of the Forum. These guidelines draw upon the previous guidelines contained in resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

II. Guidelines for country-led, organization-led, region-led and major group-led initiatives

The overall purpose of any country-led, organization-led and region-led initiative is to support the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Thus, such initiatives should be planned based on the following guidelines:

(a) These initiatives should support the multi-year programme of work for the agenda of the upcoming session in order to contribute substantively to the thematic focus of the upcoming session;

(b) These initiatives should be informal in nature, open-ended, transparent and participatory, open to participation by all member States of the Forum, as well as members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and representatives of major groups;

(c) Initiatives should strive for balanced representation from countries, reflecting a range of interests and views of all interested stakeholders; and particular attention should be paid to the participation of women;

(d) Interested Governments and organizations should announce their intention to convene such initiatives at the session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, showing a clear link to the next session and the expected input to its thematic focus;

(e) In the event the Forum does not learn of the intention for an initiative at a regular session, in the intervening period between the sessions, interested host

Governments and organizations should bring to the attention of the Bureau of the Forum their interest in convening an initiative;

(f) The secretariat will serve as a member of the Steering Committee for each initiative;

(g) The cost of such initiatives will be borne by the hosts, donors or provided from other sources; neither the regular United Nations budget nor the United Nations Forum on Forests Trust Fund will cover costs for such initiatives;

(h) The respective Bureau member from the region in which the initiative is being held, should be invited and should attend the Initiative;

(i) The travel and expenses of a minimum of one United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat member will be covered by the initiative for the preparatory process and the meeting itself;

(j) Such meetings of experts should submit a report for presentation to the Forum, conforming to its guidelines of the Forum;

(k) Based on final and summary reports received by the Secretary-General, a summary of country, regional, organization and major group-led initiatives, including financial expenditures, will be provided to the Forum at the time of its meeting.